

The Reason for the Pelican

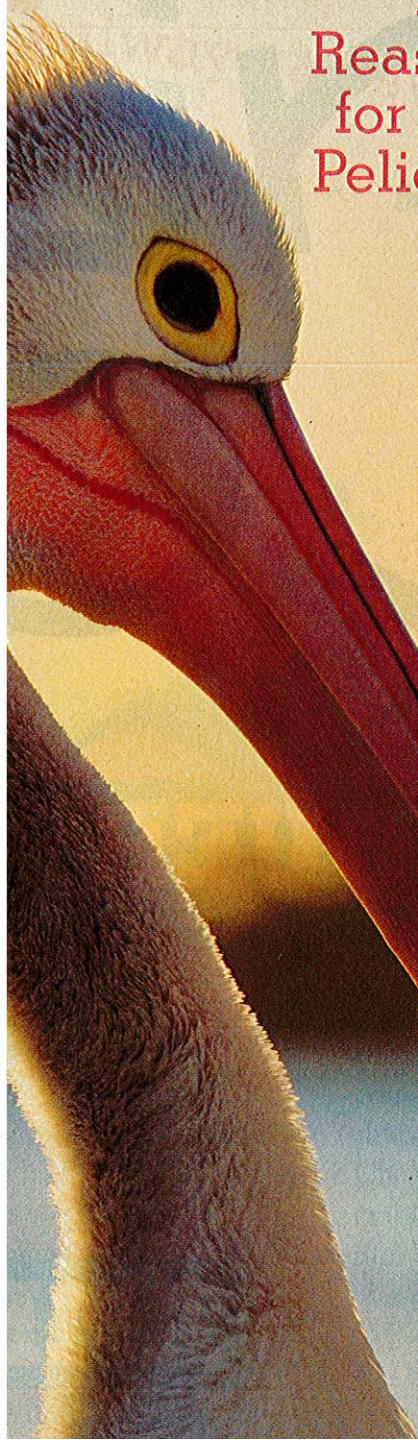
by John Ciardi

The reason for the pelican
Is difficult to see;
His beak is clearly larger
Than there's any need to be.

It's not to bail a boat with—
He doesn't own a boat.
Yet everywhere he takes himself
He has that beak to tote.

It's not to keep his wife in—
His wife has got one, too.
It's not a scoop for eating soup.
It's not an extra shoe.

It isn't quite for anything.
And yet you realize
It's really quite a splendid beak
In quite a splendid size.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Reason and Rhyme

Rhymes in a poem often follow a repeating pattern. This pattern is called the *rhyme scheme*. In this activity, you'll look for the rhyme scheme in "The Reason for the Pelican."

Directions: Answer the questions below to help you find the rhyme scheme of "The Reason for the Pelican."

1. "The Reason for the Pelican" has one set of rhyming words in each stanza (group of lines). What are they?

Stanza 1: _____ and _____

Stanza 2: _____ and _____


Stanza 3: _____ and _____


Stanza 4: _____ and _____


2. In each stanza, which lines rhyme?


See wiki page

3. The rhyme scheme of a poem is labeled with letters. Follow these steps to find the rhyme scheme of "The Reason for the Pelican."

 Look at the first stanza and read the first line. The first line is always labeled "A." Write "A" next to the first line.

 Read the second line. Does it rhyme with the first line? No. Write "B" next to it to show that it ends in a different sound.

 Read the third line. Does it rhyme with the first or second line? _____ What letter do you think you should write next to the third line? _____

 Read the fourth line. Which line does it rhyme with? _____ Write the letter of that line next to the fourth line.

Now look at the letters you have written next to lines 1 through 4. Copy them in order here:

You have found the rhyme scheme of the poem! Look at the next three stanzas. Do they follow the same rhyme scheme? _____